

THE EFFECT OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL ON BURNOUT DEVELOPMENT, MENTAL HEALTH AND WORK SATISFACTION OF NEW GRADUATE NURSES IN THEIR FIRST TWO YEARS OF PRACTICE

HEATHER K. LASCHINGER^{1,*} ROBERTA FIDA²

¹SCHOOL OF NURSING, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO, LONDON, Canada, (hkl@uwo.ca)

²PSYCHOLOGY, SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY OF ROME, ROME, Italy

Background: Nurses are the largest regulated healthcare provider group in Canada, but with an aging workforce, attention to creating work environments that retain newcomers to the profession is important for sustaining the future nursing workforce. Workplace conditions that empower employees to optimize work performance are known to enhance employee well-being and retention (Kanter, 1977).

Aim: The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of authentic leadership (AL), an organizational resource, and psychological capital (Psycap), an intrapersonal resource, on new graduate burnout development, mental health, and work satisfaction over the first year of practice.

Method: This two-wave study utilized data gathered in 2010 (T1) and in 2011 (T2) from a sample of newly graduated nurses within their first two years of experience in acute care hospitals in Ontario Canada. The final sample consisted of 205 matched cases who completed questionnaires mailed to their home addresses at both time frames, (response rate: 59.9%). We used 5 standardized questionnaires: Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio, et al. 2007), Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans et al. 2007b), Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey, Shaver and Lacey's (2003) Work Satisfaction questionnaires, and Mental Health Index-5 (Ware and Sherbourne 1992). The hypothesized model was tested using structural equation modelling in MPLUS 7.0.

Results: The model showed a good fit, ($\chi^2(68) = 133.30$, $p < .01$; CFI = .94; RMSEA = .070 (CI = .052-.087), $\rho = .04$; SRMR = .061). Results showed that both EE and CYN increased over the one-year timeframe. AL and PsyCap at Time 1 were significant predictors of initial levels of burnout and both mental health and work satisfaction at Time 2.

Conclusion: Our results suggest that among newly graduated nurses, both organizational and intrapersonal resources (authentic leadership and psychological capital) may prevent burnout development and subsequent mental health problems and contribute to greater work satisfaction.